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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2005
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEADWD/DA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/CNO WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 2393
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 9110
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 2423
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 3201
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 2415
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0339
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 3153
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0026
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0498
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 7093
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 4509
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 9421
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 3595
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 5538
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 7268
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 001996

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR XXXX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

SIPDIS
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

[1](#)1. Mideast

[1](#)2. Iran

Key stories in the media:

All media, except the ultra-Orthodox newspapers, led with news on

the plea bargain agreement for President Moshe Katsav. As a result Katsav resigned this morning. The media reported that Attorney General Menachem Mazuz faced a barrage of criticism and calls for his resignation. In a live appearance on all TV channels, "A." a high-profile plaintiff in the case, described what she claimed were sexual assaults by Katsav when she was an assistant in his office. Yediot's banner consists of an article by its senior columnist Nahum Barnea: "Disgraceful Deal." Katsav told Maariv: "This was an awful, terrible persecution." Women's groups will demonstrate on Saturday night at Tel Aviv's Rabin Square.

Israel Radio reported that in Rhode Island on Thursday, President Bush held up Israel as a model for defining success in Iraq, saying the US goal there is not to eliminate attacks but to enable a democracy that can function despite violence. The radio termed the President's comparison "strange."

Leading media reported that President Bush has officially named his choice for the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Navy Admiral Mike Mullen.

Israel Radio cited a Jordanian newspaper as saying that the Egyptian and Jordanian FMs will come to Israel next week as representatives of the Arab League.

Leading media reported that the IDF found a weapons store and arrested militants in Nablus. Two Israeli officers were seriously wounded and three other soldiers suffered lesser injuries. Israel Radio quoted Palestinian sources as saying that IDF troops killed an unarmed taxi driver. The Jerusalem Post's Web site reported that the slain man was an Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades traveling in the cab.

The Jerusalem Post reported that on Thursday Israel unilaterally reopened the Karni crossing to Gaza to avert a shortage of flour in the Strip. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe cited the EU's criticism of the Israeli policy to isolate Hamas.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Fatah is being torn apart by infighting.

Yediot reported that Iran is purchasing missiles on Syria's behalf. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that the Syrian Army is training with the lessons of the Second Lebanon War in mind and that the IDF has reopened a course for commanders of army groups.

The Jerusalem Post reported that senior Israeli defense officials told the newspaper on Thursday that Lebanon's refusal to sign an agreement brokered by UNIFIL is delaying the final withdrawal of IDF troops from the town of Ghajar, which straddles the Israeli-Lebanese border.

Ha'aretz (English Ed.) reported that on Wednesday FM Tzipi Livni criticized the UN Human Rights Council at an event marking Canada Day in Ramat Gan.

The media published many features on the Second Lebanon War as its first anniversary approaches.

Yediot and Maariv quoted Prof. Uriel Reichman, a leading founder of the Kadima Party, as saying that PM Ehud Olmert should be replaced. Reichman noted that Kadima has fallen in public opinion polls, to the extent that if an election were held today, it would only win 8 Knesset seats, down from 40.

Ha'aretz quoted former Mossad head Zvi Zamir as saying that reports in Israel about Dr. Ashraf Marwan, Israel's Egyptian agent who warned of the pending outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, led to his death.

Ha'aretz (English Ed.) quoted Ruth Messinger, President of the American Jewish World Service, an international development organization, as saying during a visit to Israel this week that the genocide in Darfur has forced the American Jewish community to expand its foreign policy interests beyond just Israel. Messinger, the former borough president of Manhattan, was one of the leading forces behind the creation of the Save Darfur Coalition, an alliance of over 100 organizations working to end the genocide in Sudan. The Democratic nominee for mayor of New York, she lost to Rudy Giuliani

in the 1997 elections.

Ha'aretz reported that the candidate preferred by the daily's panel of experts examining the upcoming US presidential elections in light of US-Israel relations is Rudolph Giuliani. The panel said the Henry Kissinger was the secretary of state who best understood the Middle East, with a score of 4.5 -- on a 1-10 scale -- regarding the Middle East and 4.625 regarding Israel. Condoleezza Rice scores under 3 on both counts. Kissinger and Rice scored similarly on the question of how well secretaries of state realized administration policy in the region.

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that PM Olmert rejected a warning by Bank of Israel Governor Stanley Fischer of an impending deficit in Israel's state budget.

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe quoted Prof. David Zaslavsky, Chairman of Israel's National Research and Development Council, as saying that Israel is losing its technological edge.

The Jerusalem Post reported that following an inquiry from the newspaper, CNN has corrected a feature on its Web site that failed to identify Jerusalem as Israel's capital and which had instead listed it as "Jerusalem, null."

Yediot and The Jerusalem Post reported that the brothers David and Ed Milliband, whom incoming British PM Gordon Brown appointed Foreign Secretary and Minister of the Cabinet Office (respectively), are the sons of Holocaust survivors.

Yediot presented the results of a Mina Zemach (Dahaf Institute) poll: 69 percent are opposed to the plea bargain reached by Katsav. Forty-two percent of the public believe that A-G Mazuz should resign in view of the gap between the indictment writ draft and the plea agreement; 47 percent believe he should not resign; 11 percent are undecided.

Ha'aretz reported that some 45 percent of high school students who immigrated from the former Soviet Union (FSU) do not believe they have a future in Israel, according to the preliminary results of a study conducted over the past two months by the Forum for Immigrant Parents and due to be published in a few months. Only 65 percent would define themselves as Israeli, the study found. However, 88 percent would accept a hyphenated definition, such as Israeli-Russian.

11. Mideast:

Summary:

Diplomatic correspondent Herb Keinon wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post: "The concern ... is ... that the reality on the ground will dictate that the IDF officers at the border crossings will have no choice, if they want to let food and medical supplies into Gaza, than to deal with the person on the other side of the crossing. And that person will be from Hamas."

Deputy Managing Editor Anshel Pfeffer wrote in The Jerusalem Post: "The composers [of Hamas's message] were totally tapped in to the public mood in Israel, and every detail in the message was aimed at its raw nerves."

Block Quotes:

1I. "Summit Summary"

Diplomatic correspondent Herb Keinon wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (6/29): "Abbas made clear, according to Israeli officials, that his strategy was simple: Let the West Bank bloom economically and politically, to show the Gazans that they have lost by throwing their lot in with Hamas, and then tempt them with what they could gain if they would just repudiate the organization. Abbas couldn't put things in such bald terms, so Olmert did it for him.... The concern, [an Israeli] official said,

is not over a political decision that will be made in Jerusalem to permit functional dealing with Hamas -- something Abbas doesn't think will happen -- but rather that the reality on the ground will dictate that the IDF officers at the border crossings will have no choice, if they want to let food and medical supplies into Gaza, than to deal with the person on the other side of the crossing. And that person will be from Hamas.... Two weeks after Hamas surprised itself, Israel, the Arab world, and the international community by effortlessly plucking control of the Gaza Strip, a senior European diplomat succinctly summarized the new emerging policy towards the Palestinians as follows: 'The West Bank first, and Gaza will follow -- somehow.' It's the 'somehow' that's the killer. The rough contours of how the main players view the 'somehow' started to appear this week: Make the West Bank blossom, and then hope, pray, and try to ensure that the Gazans will want those petals as well."

II. "Hamas Presses Israel's Buttons"

Deputy Managing Editor Anshel Pfeffer wrote in The Jerusalem Post (6/29): "Sometimes an idea's timing is so accurate, pressing all the correct buttons, that even if it's broadcast in the crudest and most blatant manner, the normally sophisticated and cynical press just swallow it hook, link, and sinker. It doesn't matter that it's totally transparent and that everyone understands exactly what's going on: It still does the trick. The perfect PR coup. And that's exactly what Hamas achieved on Monday when it sent out the 72-second recording of Gilad Shalit's voice, one year to the day he was captured... The composers [of the message] were totally tapped in to the public mood in Israel, and every detail in the message was aimed at its raw nerves."

12. Iran:

Summary:

Professor David Menashri, the Director of the Center for Iranian Studies at Tel Aviv University, wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (6/29): "Recent events [inside Iran] are a further signal of increased public discontent in general, and of disappointment in Ahmadinejad's two years [in power] in particular."

Block Quotes:

"Despairing of Ahmadinejad"

Professor David Menashri, the Director of the Center for Iranian Studies at Tel Aviv University, wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (6/29): "[Iranian] citizens have been quoted as saying that rationing fuel in a country awash in oil is inconceivable.... Ahmadinejad, who was elected two years ago after promising to improve the lot of the disadvantaged classes, is being accused of not delivering the goods. While Iran is proud of its assistance to radical movements outside its borders (Hamas and Hizbullah, e.g.), the plain citizen is being worn down.... Recent events are a further signal of increased public discontent in general, and of disappointment in Ahmadinejad's two years [in power] in particular."

JONES